



## **Town of Warren, Rhode Island**

# **Minutes of the Economic Development Board**

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The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on February 28, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street. Board Members present included Sara Volino, Paula Silva, Karen Dionne, Spencer Morris, Brandt Heckert, Kate Dickson, Darcy DaCosta, and Joel Carey. Town Council Member Davison Bolster was present. Board member Priscilla Galligan and Ex Officio member Caroline Wells were absent. Town Council members Cathy Tattrie and Davison Bolster were in attendance. Joseph DePasquale was present to discuss the Narragansett Electric property and an adjoining river walk. Woody Kemp was also present. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting on January 24, 2011**

The minutes from the regular meeting held on January 24, 2011 were reviewed by the members via email. A motion was made to approve with the following corrections:

1. Although Ms. Volino was initially selected to participate in the RWU study, the EDB representatives attending the study are Mr. Morris and Mr. Heckert
2. In regards to the 2011 Work Plan, the Board discussed the development of a Warren Arts work group, not subcommittee

Ms. Silva made a motion to accept the minutes, the motion was seconded by Mr. Heckert, and all members were in favor.

### **2. Discussion with Joseph DePasquale on Narragansett Electric property and adjoining river walk**

Mr. DePasquale was present to discuss the Narragansett Electric property and the adjoining river walk. Due to his concern about National Grid's timeline for the property, he stated that he would like to encourage a proactive position and starting a plan for the property that would include a public river walk that would extend along the adjoining American Tourister property. Mr. DePasquale and Mr. Kemp discussed the potential for creating zoning to develop the water rights to the property, which would benefit both the town and any future development. Mr. DePasquale requested the EDB, as an advisory board to Town Council, to make a recommendation to Town Council to receive a timeline from National Grid and to open a dialogue between Town Council and National Grid. Also, he suggested that a public river walk would be an economic asset to the town. The Board

discussed various zoning aspects involved in developing a river walk and how zoning ordinances in place would be beneficial to potential developers in the future. Ms. Silva made a motion that the EDB request the Town Council for a status update on the Narragansett Electric property including a detailed timeline, the motion was seconded by Ms. Dickson, and all members were in favor. Mr. Morris made a second motion that the EDB request that Town Council initiate the planning process for a river walk, the motion was seconded by Ms. Silva, and all members were in favor.

### **3. Review and Approval of final version of 2010-2011 Work Plan**

Ms. Dionne requested a meeting with Ms. Volino to consolidate revisions to the work plan before presenting a final version to the group for approval. Ms. Dionne stated that she would email the final revised draft to the board for review and commentary within one week. Ms. Dionne asked the members to indicate online which sections of the Work Plan they would like to contribute their time. The Board will vote on final approval of the 2010-2011 Work Plan at the March meeting.

### **4. Discussion and Action on recommendations to Town Council regarding predatory businesses**

Ms. Volino presented the Board with a letter from the Warren Police Department stating the state and town laws/ordinances regarding gold/jewelry pawn shops (cash for gold establishments), massage parlors, adult entertainment establishments, and tattoo shops. Currently there are no ordinances in place regulating the operation of gold/jewelry shops, other than the state ordinance that these establishments must hold items in unaltered possession for fourteen days. Ms. Volino asked the Board to review the ordinances and regulations for further discussion at the next meeting.

### **5. Update on Historic Preservation with Arnold Robinson from RWU**

Mr. Heckert and Mr. Morris discussed their participation in the RWU graduate study seminar. The town of Warren is being used as a case study in the evaluation process of the aspects of a community that need to be preserved from several perspectives, including both physical and cultural. Mr. Morris stated that the study will provide good data for the development of the town's Comprehensive Plan. The last meeting of the RWU study will be on May 9, 2011 and will provide a professional report on the town's historic assets.

### **6. Discussion about grant opportunities, i.e. RISCA, NEA, NEFA**

This agenda item was discussed briefly due to the absence of Ms. Galligan. The Board discussed the importance of researching and pursuing grant opportunities, and noted that the efforts of the EDB in this area need to be aligned with the efforts of the Town Planner, Caroline Wells.

## **7. Update on Warren Arts Council**

Ms. Silva reported that she attended the first meeting of the Warren Arts workgroup. The members of the workgroup are Lee Medeiros, Jill Colura, and Kathy Kittell. The first objective of the workgroup will be to define a mission statement. The Board discussed ways to publicize the benefits of the Arts district. Ms. Dickson stated that on March 14, 2011 she will be meeting with the Discover Warren group; they plan to incorporate an arts section on the Discover Warren website.

Ms. Silva reported that the banners are being damaged by the wind; Ms. Tattrie recommended that she make a request to the Town Manager to have the Department of Public Works remove the banners or have the banners hung properly. Ms. Silva said she would speak to the Mr. Paduch.

Mr. Morris requested that going forward that "New Business" be added as the last agenda item.

A motion was made to adjourn, the motion was seconded, and all members were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

*Minutes submitted by Kristin MacDonald  
March 18, 2011*

